

REMEMBERING LORETTA SHAW  
HARRISON

**HON. TROY A. CARTER**

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 25, 2022*

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the late Loretta Shaw Harrison.

Loretta S. Harrison was born in Verret, Louisiana, on February 1, 1956, the seventh child of twelve born to the late George W. Shaw, Sr. and Loretta Louise Moore Shaw. She passed away peacefully around family and friends on February 16, 2022, at the age of 66, after a brave battle with breast cancer. She is survived by three sons she adored, Robert, Rodrick, and Kendrick; two grandchildren; two godchildren; eight of her siblings; and many nephews, nieces, and friends.

Loretta was a faithful steward of God with the belief that if you "put God first, He will grant the wishes of your heart." She shared her unwavering love and dedication for God and the city of New Orleans with everyone she encountered. She was a woman with incredible grace and moral fortitude and was a guiding light to her friends and community.

Loretta, lovingly referred to as the "Praline Queen," was the chef and owner of the historic Loretta's Authentic Pralines, becoming the first African American woman to own and operate a praline company in New Orleans. She made friends and admirers worldwide through her shop and her long-standing record as a food vendor at the city's biggest festivals, starting with the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival. Her mother made pralines after church for family and guests visiting their home. By age 8, Loretta was cooking them alongside her mom, using a recipe that went back to her great grandmother. After graduating from Southern University at New Orleans, she went to work at the LSU Medical Library, where she sold pralines to students on the side. In 1978, her big break came when she heard that the Jazz & Heritage Festival put out the call for a praline vendor. She won the contract, sold 1,500 pralines in two weekends, and continued to supply the festival for over 40 years. The success inspired her to leave her job and develop her business full time.

Unfortunately, success did not come without a few failures along the way. Yet, she believed in her product and herself. By 1983, she opened her first shop in Jax Brewery. Later, she moved to the French Market, and in the 1990s, by the grace of God, she opened a second, much larger shop and production kitchen in Faubourg Marigny that serves gumbo, seafood platters, stuffed peppers, and calas, as well as pie, cookies, and king cake. She was a proud entrepreneur who advocated for local business owners, cultural and culinary arts.

After Hurricane Katrina, she quickly returned to New Orleans and was a vocal advocate for small businesses in meetings with national and local officials. During this difficult time, her business was buoyed by her steadfast belief that anything which can be destroyed can be rebuilt. She took immediate action, changing her business model to include an online storefront and becoming a restaurant for reporters, emergency workers, and volunteers rebuilding

the city. She added plate lunches and dishes like gumbo, figuring people needed a place to grab a meal more than sweets. She would continue to evolve her menu and creations. She added praline filling to traditional beignets and even made beignets into sandwiches filled with crab cakes, eggs and bacon, and hamburger patties.

A veritable Renaissance Woman, she was a faithful member of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church. She was a wonder to all who knew and loved her, and she will be remembered fondly for her joyful spirit and relentless optimism, which served her well until God called her home. Through her heroic battle with cancer, Loretta has helped shower numerous heavenly graces and blessings upon all of those she loved so deeply, and we are eternally grateful. I was honored and blessed to have known Loretta Harrison, and send my prayers to her beloved family in this difficult time.

**HONORING WILLARD WALKER**

**HON. ELISSA SLOTKIN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 25, 2022*

Ms. SLOTKIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Willard Walker, a civil rights era leader, devoted public servant, youth football coach, MSU alumnus, and friend to the Greater Lansing community. For more than 50 years, Mr. Walker has fought tirelessly for social justice, and the community is so much better for his efforts.

Raised in Columbus, Georgia, by his grandmother, he joined the military after graduating from Albany State University.

His first job out of the military was as a math teacher in Chicago. There, he fought to unite historically segregated schools. Willard met and married his first wife in Chicago, with whom he had two children. They eventually moved to Alabama, where Mr. Walker began work for the Birmingham Urban League, before arriving at Michigan State University in 1969, where he was the first Black student in the industrial relations department. He lived in Case Hall, a place he described as the epicenter for black student life.

Mr. Walker has been influential in both local and state government, serving under four City of Lansing Mayors in various roles, including director of the Human Resources and Community Services Department, and on the Lansing Police Commission. At the state level he served as director of Michigan's School-to-Work Office, director of the Michigan Department of Commerce, and deputy director of the Neighborhood Builders Alliance—just to name a few.

But beyond his many impressive titles, his work to ensure the Greater Lansing area is a more equitable and welcoming place is legendary. As a founding member of the Greater Lansing Area, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Commission, he was the first recipient of the Commission's MLK Legacy Award in 2010.

In 2018, the City of Lansing Parks and Recreation Department dedicated the former youth sports facility, Ridsdale Park, in his honor, and it is now known as the Willard Walker stadium at Ridsdale Park. It gives me great happiness to know that through these

awards and honors, his legacy of service will continue to provide a positive impact in the Greater Lansing community for generations to come.

Mr. Walker is married to his current wife Victoria where they have been residents of Lansing's historic Westside for over five decades. Two years ago, he returned to local government to serve the City of Lansing as a consultant in Human Relations and Community Service, a department he ran for over a decade.

It's an honor to represent a community leader like Mr. Willard Walker in Washington, and I am grateful for his personal and professional sacrifices to advance civil rights at the local, state, and national levels. May his efforts be forever celebrated, uplifted, and immortalized.

**IN RECOGNITION OF RICHARD JENKINS' OUTSTANDING MILITARY SERVICE**

**HON. MIKE GALLAGHER**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 25, 2022*

Mr. GALLAGHER. Madam Speaker, it is my honor to recognize World War Two veteran Richard Jenkins for his incredible role in liberating Czechoslovakia in May 1945. Today the Czech Republic will present him with an Honorary Commemorative Medal of Merit in Liberating Czechoslovakia during World War Two. Shortly after the attacks on Pearl Harbor, Mr. Jenkins and his brothers enlisted in the United States Military, leaving their home in Michigan. After training in Louisiana, Mr. Jenkins was assigned to be a member of the 8th Armored Division, 130th Ordnance Maintenance Battalion of the United States Army. He was then deployed to England in January 1945 for further training. After reaching Europe, the 8th Armored Division attempted to quickly push through the Hurtgen Forest on the border of Belgium and Germany. Mr. Jenkins provided crucial support to ensure the United States' success in the Battle of the Bulge. Mr. Jenkins and his ordnance provided the support needed by the 8th Armored Division as they successfully pushed back the German Army. Refueling and mechanical assistance were some of Mr. Jenkins' many roles in the 130th Ordnance, without this support the 8th Division may not have been able to traverse the thick Hurtgen forest. After success at the Battle of the Bulge, the 8th Armored Division transitioned toward Czechoslovakia. On May 8, 1945, Nazi Germany surrendered to the Allies, bringing an end to World War Two in the European Theater. Then, in late May, the 8th Armored Division was ordered to Czechoslovakia to assist in the processing of prisoners of war, operating displaced person camps, and guarding vital installations. The assistance of Mr. Jenkins and the 8th Armored Division was integral to the liberation of Czechoslovakia. The successful liberation of Czechoslovakia as a result of the impressive effort of U.S. troops and the citizens of Pilsen is still celebrated today. The Pilsen Festival in The Czech Republic celebrates the key assistance the United States and our troops played in liberating the country from Nazi rule. Without heroes like Mr. Jenkins, we may not be able to celebrate these freedoms.